



Washington State Gambling Commission

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Poker Runs

What is a Poker Run?

A Poker Run is a raffle where tickets/tally sheets are sold and prizes are awarded to winners based on their hand of playing cards ("alternative" drawing).

Alternative drawing vs. Standard drawing.

For Poker Runs, winners are determined by their hand of cards; this is an "alternative" drawing. A "standard" drawing is pulling winning tickets out of a hat. Whenever raffle winners are *not* determined by a "standard" drawing, you must get a raffle license.

What is a raffle?

- ♠ A raffle is a gambling activity.
- ♠ A gambling activity involves *three* elements:
Prize, consideration (entry fee/wager) & **chance**.
- ♠ If one of the three elements is removed, it is no longer gambling. For example:
 - ♠ If entry into a contest is **free** (*no consideration*) it is not gambling.
 - ♠ If winners are selected based on their **skill** (*not chance*) it is not gambling.
- ♠ Generally, anyone can offer a "free entry" or "skill" contest, because it is not gambling.

Who can offer a Poker Run?

- ♠ Only charitable or nonprofit organizations that have a raffle gambling license.
- ♠ Individuals and commercial businesses **cannot** offer raffles or Poker Runs.

How are Poker Runs operated?

- ♦ The organization sells participants consecutively numbered tickets/tally sheets.
- ♦ Participants travel (often using motorcycles, snowmobiles, classic cars, boats, or horses) to predetermined checkpoints. Usually, there are 5 to 7 checkpoints.
- ♦ At each checkpoint, participants randomly draw a playing card for each ticket or tally sheet purchased.
- ♦ Checkpoint attendants verify the card drawn and record the card value on the poker tally sheet.
- ♦ After all participants have completed the run, the participant with the best, or worst, recorded poker hand wins (depending on rules of play).



Does my organization need a license to offer a Poker Run? **Yes, you need a raffle license.**

Can my organization apply for a raffle license?

Washington State law requires that your charitable or nonprofit organization's by-laws or articles of incorporation state the organization is organized and operating **only** for one or more of the following purposes:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| ♠ Agricultural | ♠ Civic | ♠ Patriotic |
| ♠ Athletic | ♠ Educational | ♠ Political |
| ♠ Charitable | ♠ Fraternal | ♠ Social |

Or be one of the following:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| ♠ Agricultural Fair | ♠ Church |
| ♠ Fraternal Society | ♠ Grange |
| ♠ Religious Society | |

If your organization's by-laws or articles of incorporation include any stated purpose(s) other than those listed above, you do not qualify to offer a raffle or a Poker Run. Normally, trade unions or associations that primarily lobby do not qualify.

If you meet the "stated purpose" requirement above, your organization **must also** meet the following three requirements:

- ♠ Have been organized and operating for at least 12 months **before** offering the Poker Run; and
- ♠ Be able to prove your organization has made significant progress towards accomplishing its stated purposes during the 12 consecutive months before offering the Poker Run; and
- ♠ Have at least 15 voting members who elect the governing body.

Your organization must sell tickets, determine winners, and award prizes **only** in Washington.

Selling tickets:

- ♣ Maximum price per ticket is \$100.
- ♣ No free tickets or tickets as gifts.
- ♣ Tickets may be bundled and sold at a discount.
- ♣ Tickets must be paid for in full by cash, check, or credit card. No IOU's.
- ♣ Tickets cannot be sold over the Internet; however, you can advertise on the Internet.
- ♣ Tickets and/or payment for tickets cannot be mailed; however, advertisements can be mailed.
- ♣ Tickets must be consecutively numbered or printed with letters or symbols that don't repeat.
- ♣ Only members of your organization, or volunteers under the supervision of a member, may sell tickets.
- ♣ Individuals under 18 years of age may sell tickets, **only** if (WAC 230-06-010):
 - ♣ Your organization's primary purpose is to develop youth; and
 - ♣ At least three members of your organization, age 18 or older, supervise the Poker Run; and
 - ♣ A member, age 18 or older, manages the Poker Run.

Purchasing tickets:

- ♣ You must be age 18 or older to purchase a ticket.
- ♣ Organization members may purchase tickets; however, membership must not be based on purchasing a ticket.



Prizes:

- ♣ Prizes must be owned by your organization before they are awarded.
- ♣ Firearms may be awarded under certain restrictions (WAC 230-06-025).
- ♣ If the retail value of a prize is \$40,000 or more, you must get approval from us before offering the Poker Run.
- ♣ Display your license, or a copy of your license, at the location where prizes will be awarded.

Management, recordkeeping and reporting:

- ♣ Members must not be paid for managing or operating the Poker Run.
- ♣ Recordkeeping/Reporting requirements and forms are available on our website or by contacting our field office closest to you.
- ♣ Records must be kept for 3 years.

Use of proceeds:

Proceeds must be used towards your organization's stated purpose. However, proceeds may go to the charitable benefit of a specific person, but only if you get approval from us before offering the Poker Run.

Rules of play:

The following must be clearly printed on each ticket, poker tally sheet, or available in writing:

- ♣ Cost per chance (\$100 maximum per ticket).
- ♣ Name of your charitable or nonprofit organization.
- ♣ Whether participants need to be present to win.
- ♣ Date, time, and location of where winners will be determined.
- ♣ Description of all prizes. If the prize is a percentage of the gross receipts of the raffle, a minimum prize must be disclosed.
- ♣ *For Members-Only Poker Runs:* Rules of play may be posted at each ticket sales point, rather than printing rules on each ticket or providing them in writing.

Contact your local city or county:

- ♣ Notify local law enforcement, in writing, before selling tickets (WAC 230-06-055).
- ♣ Check with your local taxing authority for any taxes due. The first \$10,000 of net proceeds is exempt from taxation (RCW 9.46.110).

Is your business a Poker Run drawing station?

Before allowing your business to be a stopping point/drawing station for a Poker Run, make sure the charitable or nonprofit organization operating the Poker Run has a gambling license and they are operating the Poker Run correctly.

For more information about Raffles:

Visit our website at www.wsgc.wa.gov:

- ♦ Raffle: [Brochure](#), [FAQs](#), [Presentation](#), [Training](#), [Records](#), [Application for a license](#)
- ♦ Laws: [RCW 9.46.0209](#), [RCW 9.46.0277](#)
- ♦ Rules: [WAC 230-11](#)
- ♦ License Fees: [WAC 230-05-020\(6\)](#)

For questions about:

- ♦ Applying for a gambling license: (360) 486-3440.
- ♦ Operating a Poker Run, contact our Regional Field Office closest to you:

Everett

(425) 304-6300 EverettFO@wsgc.wa.gov

Spokane

(509) 325-7900 SpokaneFO@wsgc.wa.gov

Tacoma

(253) 671-6280 TacomaFO@wsgc.wa.gov

**If you or someone you know
has a gambling problem
Call (800) 547-6133**

To inquire about the availability of this document in an alternate format, please call (360) 486-3466 or (800) 345-2529 ext. 3466.
Teletype (TTY) users please call (360) 486-3637